Reach out a hand to one, influence the condition of all.
A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

April 2022 marks one year for me as President and CEO of this great organization. Looking back on this year, I want to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who continues to make our work possible—from our thousands of donors to our dedicated volunteers to our family of partners.

This year’s campaign raised more than $8.7 million, an increase over last year’s total, and a testament to the incredible generosity of local companies and individuals. This generosity means more than 100 funded programs improve the lives of 1 in 3 people in the Fox Cities. It means families are sheltered from homelessness and abuse, people find hope through counseling services, children receive the care they need to thrive to their fullest potential, and so much more.

As I reach my one-year anniversary, United Way Fox Cities will be turning 75 years old. For the past 75 years, you and those who came before you have uplifted and empowered friends, neighbors, and co-workers by supporting our work. I am excited to move forward together, ensuring that our mission of building a stronger, more caring community for everyone is fulfilled for generations to come.

Underneath everything we are, underneath everything we do, we are connected, interdependent, UNITED. When we reach out a hand to one, we influence the condition of all. That’s what it means to LIVE UNITED; you bring our brand credo to life in our community every day. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Peter Gianopoulos, President and CEO

EDUCATION

Some of our little ones were able to thrive during the pandemic with their caregivers at home. Others are returning to child care and showing signs of regression; they may not have interacted with peers for more than a year. To understand the impact of COVID-19 on child development, First Five Fox Valley embarked on a new effort supported by United Way Fox Cities to compile data from the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), providing critical insights to address these delays. The results from children assessed in 2021 showed nearly 20 percent more children ages 0-5 years experiencing an overall concerning delay in the achievement of developmental milestones during the pandemic. United Way-funded childcare programs pivoted to stay open safely and support children and their caregivers.

In 2021, United Way-supported programs advanced our goal of ensuring children and youth are on track to reach their full potential.

- 974 young children flourished in quality care, helping them reach developmental milestones
- 7,480 youth found an enriching safe haven at tutoring and after-school programs
- 93% of children in United Way-funded programs increased their language and communication skills

“Teachers used lessons from our Kindness Curriculum to help children practice coping skills and talk about the importance of social and emotional well-being.”

Nicole Desten, Executive Director at Bridges Child Enrichment Center
What are the conditions that allow a person to stay employed and do their best work?
The answer undoubtedly includes a good night of rest, enough food, low stress levels, and reliable transportation. CAP Services' Skills Enhancement Program, supported by United Way Fox Cities, provides wrap-around care that stabilizes participants' whole well-being as they pursue their education and career goals. According to the United for ALICE Project, a single-adult household needs to earn at least $11.13 per hour in the Fox Cities to afford basic necessities like housing, food, health care, and transportation. Sixty-four percent of individuals who successfully completed the Skills Enhancement Program are now earning more than $18 per hour, positioning them to sustain a stable budget. Learn more about ALICE at UnitedWayFoxCities.org.

“I didn’t think I’d see another birthday. But then I found Harbor House. There are so many resources that I didn’t even know existed until I came here.”
Brenda, a survivor of domestic abuse

In 2021, United Way-supported programs advanced our goal of ensuring children, youth, and adults are healthy.

In 2021, United Way-supported programs advanced our goal of ensuring individuals and families are financially stable.

“I is so rewarding to be part of their journey as our graduates achieve success, not only in their career, but as a person living a fulfilled and meaningful life.”
Kim Calmes, Skills Enhancement Program Coordinator at CAP Services
Be Well Fox Valley, a community-clinical initiative created to improve health and well-being, launched an innovative new program in 2021 called Eat Well for Life. The 13-week program supports community members living with food insecurity and uncontrolled type 2 diabetes as they adopt healthier lifestyles. Participants and their households receive food, recipes, meal plans, and diabetes education to achieve their health goals, such as managing diabetes with fewer complications. One participant shared, “My hemoglobin A1c dropped more than two points and I’m feeling better with less pain.” United Way Fox Cities serves as the backbone for Be Well Fox Valley. Learn more: bewellfoxvalley.org

Diapers are essential to a baby's healthy development, impacting the physical, mental, and economic well-being of families. In 2021, United Way’s Fox Cities Diaper Bank distributed a total of 508,575 diapers to local families — another record setting year! Keeping more than 1,000 local babies each month clean, healthy, and dry is only made possible with support from generous donors to United Way Fox Cities and ongoing Huggies® diaper donations from Kimberly-Clark Corporation. We also rely on warehouse space and staff support from Valley Packaging Industries, the hard-working volunteers who prepare diapers for distribution, and the 20 dedicated programs that distribute diapers to struggling families.

United Way’s PATH (Providing Access to Healing) for students serves children through school-based mental health therapy in 32 schools across all 10 Fox Cities’ school districts. The need for PATH’s services has only intensified during the pandemic as students face new learning challenges, experience isolation, and grieve losses. Throughout these obstacles, PATH therapists have found ways to offer a consistent lifeline, providing 3,296 sessions to students during the 2020/2021 school year. Therapists transitioned mental health services from in-person to virtual, which allowed therapy to continue despite staff shortages and provided parents with an opportunity to be involved in their child's treatment without missing work.

In partnership with United Way Fox Cities, Valley Transit operates VT Connector, giving rides to those who need affordable transportation outside of normal bus routes or operating hours. In 2021, 97% of rides through VT Connector helped employees get to work, tying last year’s highest percentage since its inception. Learn more at myvalleytransit.com/vt-connector

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On the cover (left to right): Lulu Beré, Tocqueville Giver, Emerging Leader, and Community Impact Volunteer; Dustin McClone, Board Chair; Kailey Krzoska, Past Youth Board Co-Leader; Rich Garman, Community Impact Volunteer; Sarah Paulson, Emerging Leaders Committee Member

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